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DAREDEVIL®

FRANK MILLER

BILL SIENKIEWICZ

A
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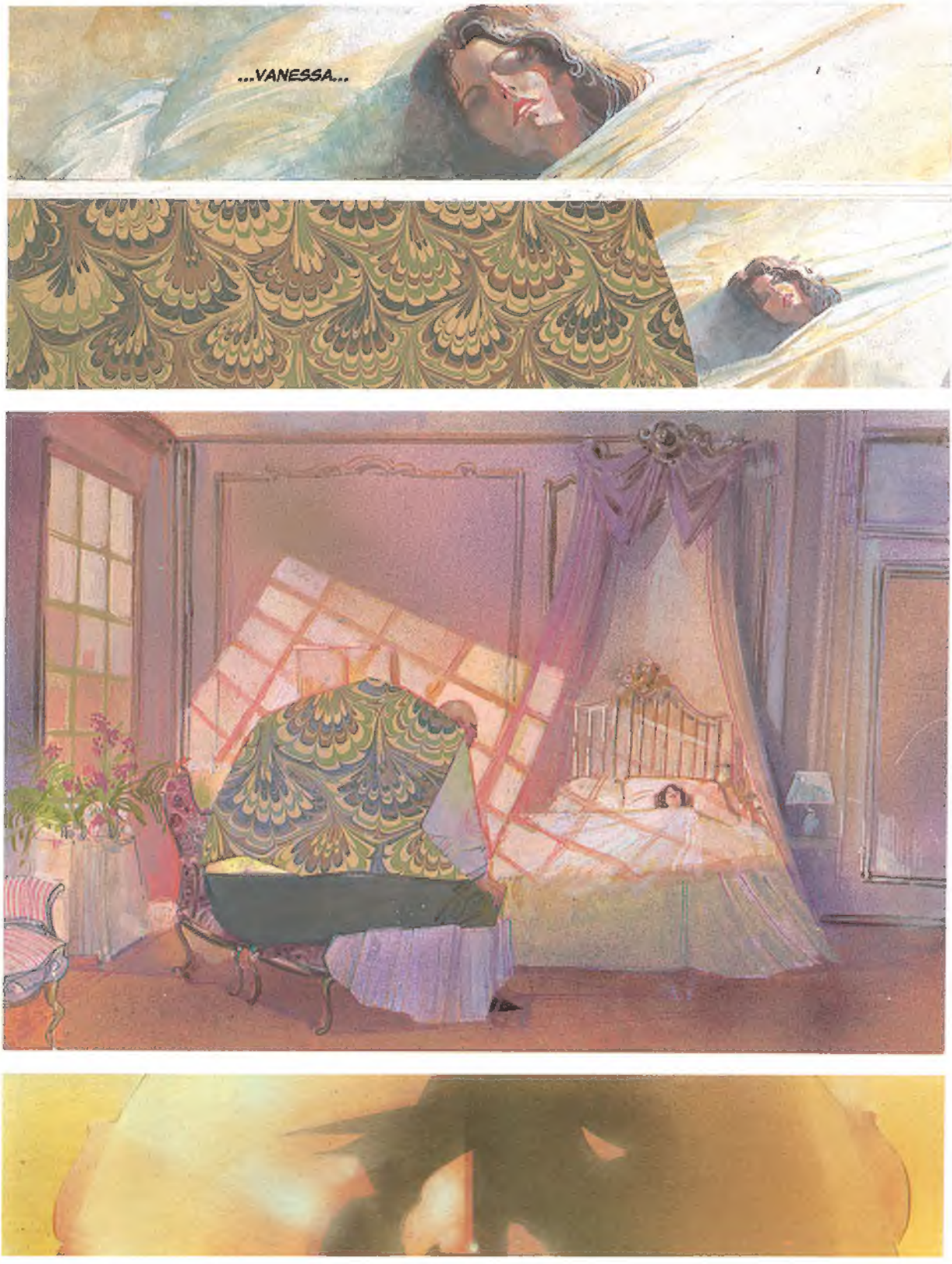
LOVE AND WAR
STORY: FRANK MILLER
ART: BILL SIENKIEWICZ
LETTERING: JIM NOVAK
EDITOR: ALLEN MILGROM
EDITOR IN CHIEF: JIM SHOOTER
I HAVE BUILT AN EMPIRE ON HUMAN SIN.
I AM FEARED BY THE HONEST AND THE WICKED. ELECTED OFFICIALS OBEY MY WILL AS SWIFTLY AS THE LOWEST PIMPS AND PUSHERS.
I HAVE EVERYTHING I DESIRED...
EVERYTHING I DESIRED... UNTIL I MET YOU...

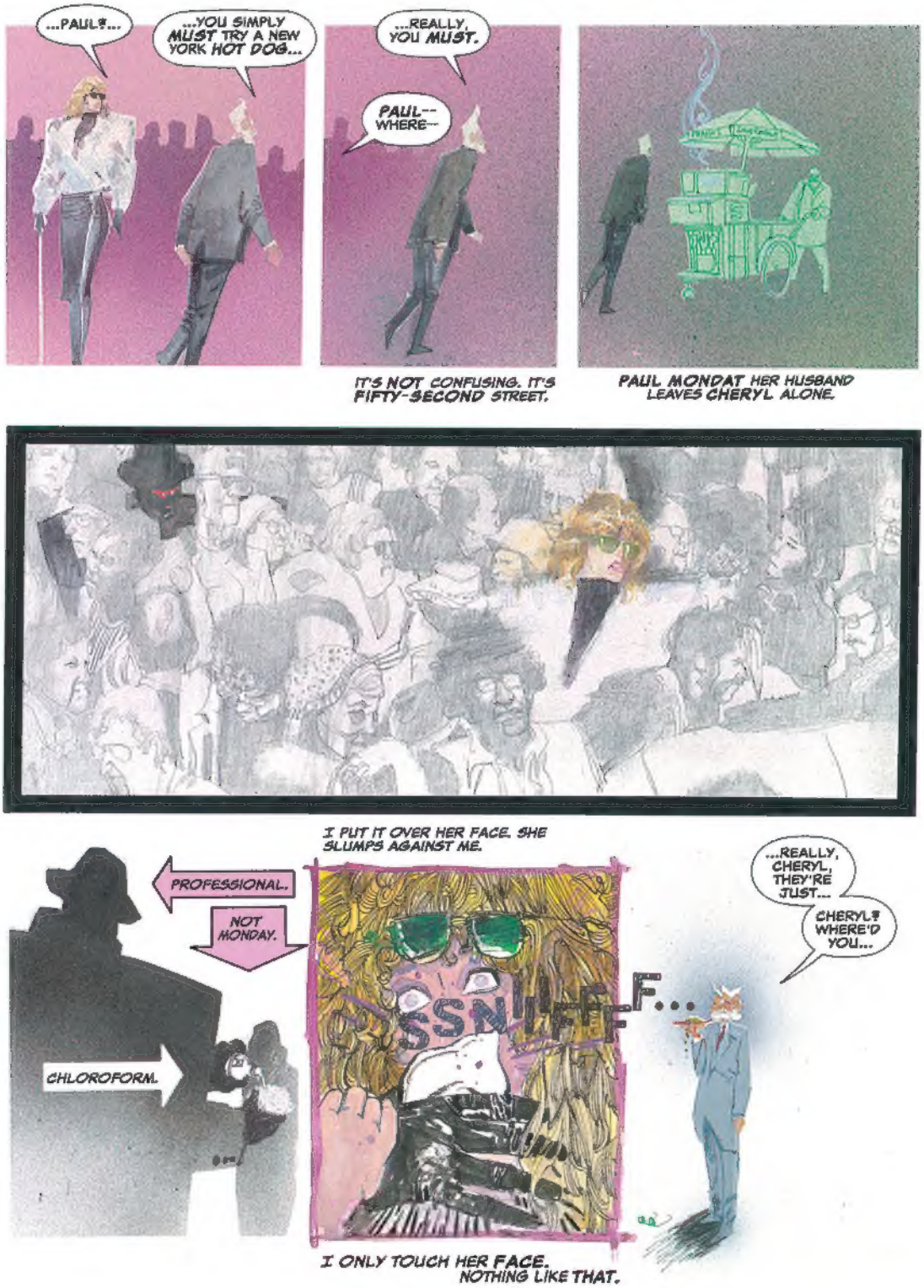

...VANESSA...

...DO YOU REMEMBER... HOW WE MET?
IT WAS TWENTY YEARS AGO TONIGHT...
I WAS NO KINGPIN OF CRIME THEN.
NO...
...MERELY THE LEADER OF A BAND OF PETTY THIEVES...
THEY BROUGHT YOU TO ME.
AS CHATTEL.
THEIR SQUINTING RAT'S EYES SAW ONLY A GIRL OF FIFTEEN, LOST, AFRAID, AMNESIAC...
...THEY COULDN'T SEE THE NATURAL GRACE...THE DEPTH OF YOUR SPIRIT...
BUT I...
...I SAW THE OBJECT OF EVERY LONELY DREAM I'D EVER HAD.
I SAW... ESCAPE...

VANESSA ...MY WIFE...
...MY LOVE...
...SPEAK TO ME... I BEG YOU...
SPEAK!
YOU HAVE SPOKEN, NOT OFTEN, THESE PAST MONTHS. THE WORDS HAVE STUMBLED, SENSELESS, FROM YOUR LIPS...
...THERE MUST BE A PART OF YOU...TRAPPED, BURIED ALIVE...
YOU WAIT FOR ME...
...FOR YOUR CHANCE TO LIVE AGAIN.
AND, THOUGH I MUST COMMIT AN ACT YOU WILL NEVER FORGIVE--
--YOU WILL HAVE THAT CHANCE.

--HER NAME IS CHERYL MONDAT NOT MONDAY WHICH IS THE NAME OF A DAY. SHE'S A LOOKER. SHE'S BLIND SO THAT'S A FUNNY THING TO SAY.

FISK IS THE KINGPIN WHO IS MY BOSS. I MOVE CLOSER TO THEM. I DON'T RUSH. I'M A PROFESSIONAL.


...PAUL?...
...YOU SIMPLY MUST TRY A NEW YORK HOT DOG...
...REALLY, YOU MUST.
PAUL-- WHERE--
IT'S NOT CONFUSING. IT'S FIFTY-SECOND STREET.
PAUL MONDAT HER HUSBAND LEAVES CHERYL ALONE.
I PUT IT OVER HER FACE. SHE SLUMPS AGAINST ME.
PROFESSIONAL.
NOT MONDAY.
CHLOROFORM.
SSNIFFF...
...REALLY, CHERYL, THEY'RE JUST...
CHERYL? WHERE'D YOU...
I ONLY TOUCH HER FACE. NOTHING LIKE THAT.

I WATCH PAUL MONDAT STAND STILL AND NOT TALK FOR NINETEEN MINUTES.

THEN I TAKE CHERYL AWAY.

NOT MONDAY.

SHE'S A **SWEET** WOMAN, JOSIE IS...

...HER JOINT SQUATS NEAR THE WATER, JUST OFF **SOUTH STREET.** ON THE DARK SIDE OF TOWN.

IT'S A NIGHTLY HANGOUT FOR THE **WORST** NEW YORK HAS TO OFFER.

JOSIE ONLY WANTS **PEACE** AND **QUIET.**

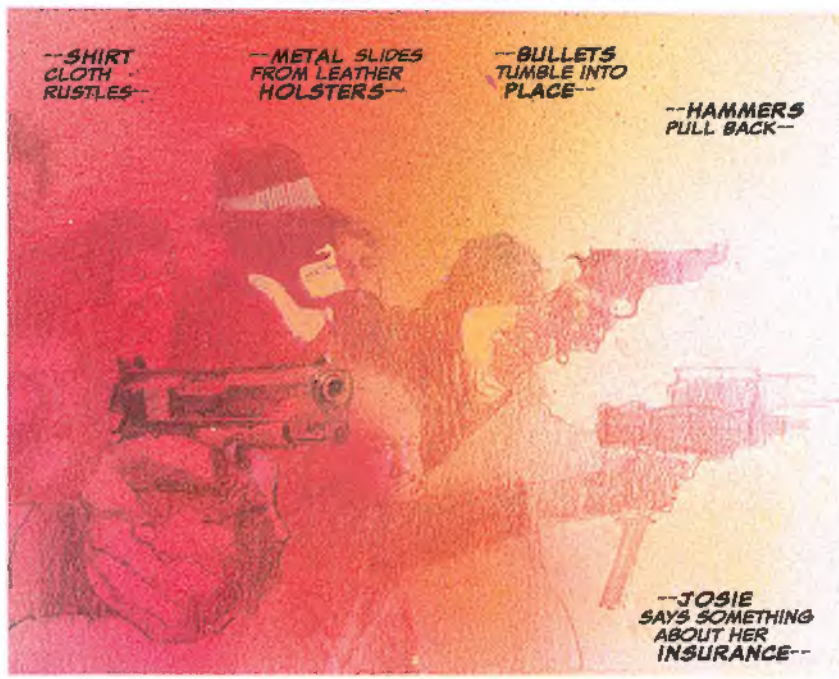
SHE'S NEVER VERY HAPPY TO SEE ME.

NEITHER ARE THE **REST**--THROUGH A **WAVE** OF **CIGARETTE SMOKE** AND CHEAP **BOOZE** I SMELL THE SUDDEN **FEAR** IN THEIR **SWEAT**--

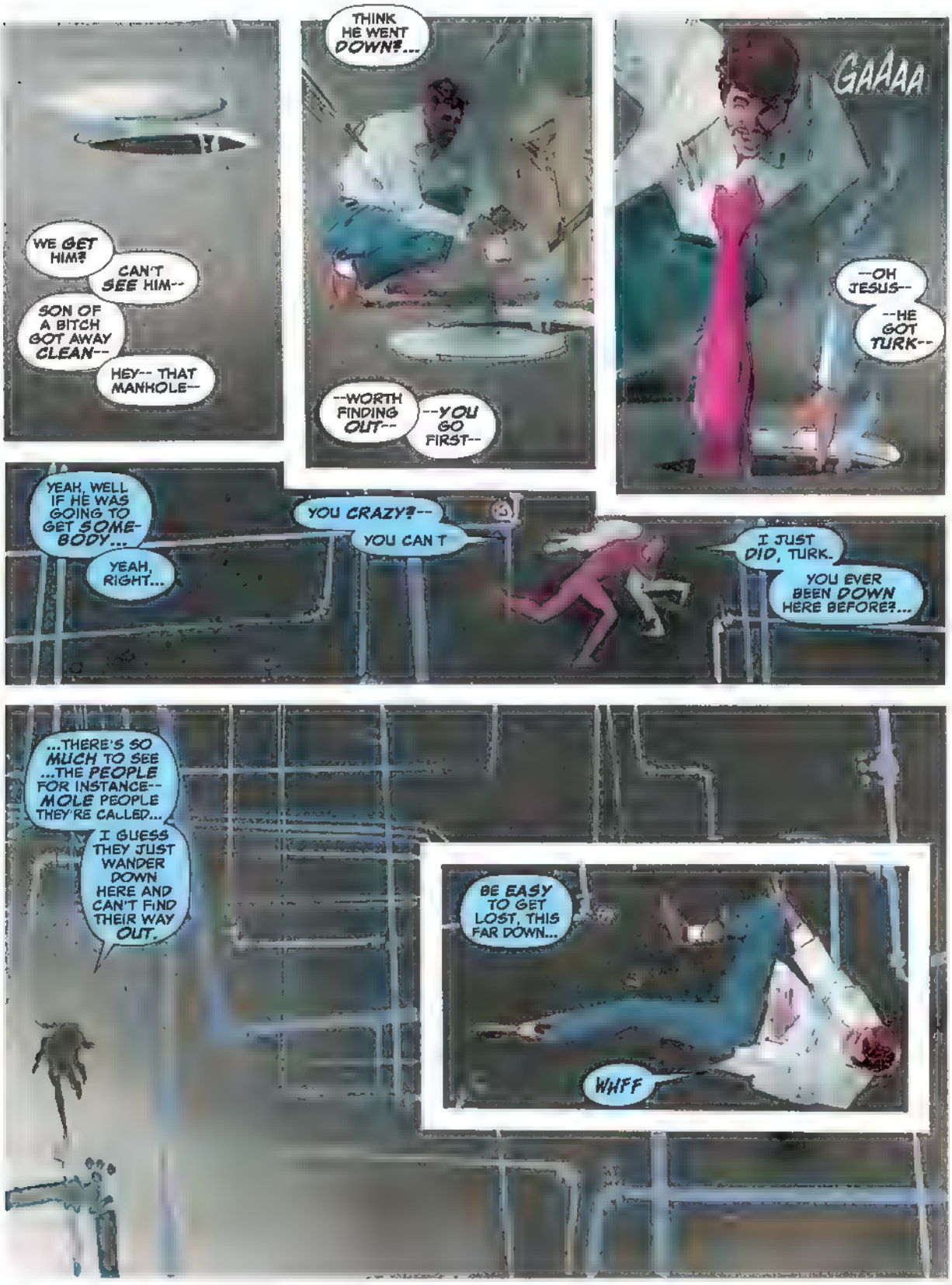
--THE PLACE FALLS **SILENT**--TO **NORMAL** EARS, THAT IS--

...NOT TO **MINE.**

THEIR **HEARTBEATS** JUMP-- EXCEPT FOR ONE GUY IN THE **BACK** WITH A **PACEMAKER**--



THE NEXT SOUNDS ARE TOO MUCH FOR SENSITIVE EARS.
I GET SOME DISTANCE, FARING BETTER THAN THE FRONT OF JOSIE'S BAR AND GRILL.
ABOUT THE EARS--MY SENSES ARE SUPERHUMANLY ACUTE--EXCEPT FOR ONE.
I'M BLIND.
THEY CALL ME DAREDEVIL.


WE GET HIM?
CAN'T SEE HIM--
SON OF A BITCH GOT AWAY CLEAN--
HEY-- THAT MANHOLE--
THINK HE WENT DOWN?...
--WORTH FINDING OUT--
--YOU GO FIRST--
GAAAA
--OH JESUS--
--HE GOT TURK--
YEAH, WELL IF HE WAS GOING TO GET SOMEBODY...
YEAH, RIGHT...
YOU CRAZY?--
YOU CAN'T
I JUST DID, TURK.
YOU EVER BEEN DOWN HERE BEFORE?...
...THERE'S SO MUCH TO SEE ...THE PEOPLE FOR INSTANCE-- MOLE PEOPLE THEY'RE CALLED...
I GUESS THEY JUST WANDER DOWN HERE AND CAN'T FIND THEIR WAY OUT.
BE EASY TO GET LOST, THIS FAR DOWN...
WHFF

MAN, YOU GOT MY PANTS WET...
... I MEAN JESUS, MAN. THEY COST FORTY BUCKS...
COME ON, MAN. GET SERIOUS. YOU AREN'T LEAVING ME HERE...
OKAY. I'LL TALK. IT'S THE KINGPIN. WANTS YOU DEAD.
THAT'S ALL I KNOW, MAN.
REALLY.
OKAY. OKAY. THE FAT MAN IS UP TO SOMETHING BIG.
GOT TO DO WIF CURIN' H S WIFE. I GOTS NO IDEA WHAT.
I TELLIN' YOU STRAIGHT, MAN. I SWEAR.
MOTHER'S GRAVE, MAN. I SWEAR.
HE'S SUCKERED A BRAIN DOCTOR INTO TOWN AN' HOGGED HIS WIFE, SO THE DOCTOR WILL FIX VANESSA.
C'MON, MAN-- YOU TAKE ME UP NOW?
SURE, TURK.
I'LL TAKE YOU BACK UP.
ONCE WE FIGURE OUT HOW YOU'RE GOING TO HELP ME.

LIKE APPLE SAUCE ON STRAWBERRIES--
--CHERYL IS RIGHT HERE AND SHE'S A SLEEPING BEAUTY.
BEAUTY IS THE RIGHT WORD. BETTER THAN LOOKER. THAT'S TOO CHEAP.
SHE'S LIKE HELEN OF TROY OR KATE JACKSON.
SHE'S PERFECT.
NOBODY WILL FIND HER HERE.
NOT IN THIS DIVE. I PICKED IT BECAUSE IT'S A HANGOUT FOR DRUNKS AND JUNKIES AND OTHER SCUM SO NOBODY CAN THINK IT'S A BIG DEAL I BROUGHT A SACKED OUT BROAD HERE.
IT'S MY JOB TO KNOW THESE THINGS.
I JUST CALLED HER A BROAD. I SHOULD WATCH MY THOUGHTS.
SHE'S AN ANGEL.
THE KIND YOU'D WORSHIP AND NEVER TOUCH. NEVER MAKE DIRTY. NOTHING LIKE THAT.
NOTHING LIKE THAT.

SHE'S MOVING-- WAKING UP--
IT'S NICE...
...JUST SITTING AND LOOKING AT HER.
I JUST LOOK AT HER FACE.
NOTHING LIKE THAT.
SHE'S SAFE WITH ME.
FOR NO REASON NO REASON AT ALL THE SHAKES START--
--I NEED SOMETHING-- I'LL CALL THE KINGPIN-- I DID GOOD HE'LL FIX ME UP--

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS? WHERE IS MY--
QUIET. VANESSA SLEEPS.
YOU WIFE IS SAFE, DOCTOR. MINE... REMAINS IN A LIVING DEATH.
THAT'S TRAGIC, BUT...
THE SPECIALISTS... MAINTAIN THAT HER... PROBLEM... IS NOT ORGANIC.
YOU WILL RESTORE HER-- OR NEVER SEE CHERYL AGAIN.
I COULD NOT SIMPLY HIRE YOU.
I WANT YOUR PASSION, DOCTOR.
YOU MUST FEEL AS I FEEL-- A CRYING LOSS. A GROWING TERROR.
YOU MUST KNOW THAT YOU HOLD IN YOUR HANDS THE LIFE OF THE WOMAN YOU CHERISH.
WHEN VANESSA WAKES, YOU BEGIN.

...YEAH, YEAH. WE SEE DAREDEVIL, WE SHOOT. FINE. THAT'S WHAT WE'RE GOOD AT.
BUT RUNNING PILLS?...
THIRD HANGOUT WE'VE CHECKED.
WE GET LUCKY--THROUGH THE CRACKLE ON THE TELEPHONE LINE, I HEAR THE VOICE OF THE KINGPIN'S RIGHT HAND MAN...
...JESUS, WESLEY. WE'RE GETTING NOTHING BUT SHIT JOBS. KINGPIN'S GOT TO HAVE SOMETHING-- HOLD ON.
GET LOST, TURK.
MURRAY-- I'M HUNGRY, MAN.
THE ROAD, TURK. HIT IT.
...LOOK, WESLEY-- IT'S NOBODY'S FAULT BUT YOURS YOU HIRED VICTOR. THAT PSYCHO IS... YEAH, I KNOW HE WORKS CHEAP...
...BUT YOU GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR, MAN...
...DO ANY JOB, MURR. I'M HUNGRY...
...WH...WHAT DO YOU MEAN, WESLEY? THE KINGPIN WOULDN'T... HE SAID THAT?
...SHIT. ALL RIGHT, MAN...
I'M GOING, MURR...
TURK-- HOLD ON--
--GOT A DELIVERY FOR YOU.

WESLEY SAYS ONE HOUR. HOPE THEY DON'T SEND TURK. STILL OWES ME SEVEN DOLLARS.
AND TWELVE CENTS.

YOU'RE SO BEAUTIFUL, CHERYL.
I SEE US TOGETHER, A QUEEN AND HER MOST LOYAL KNIGHT. YOU'RE IN A LONG WHITE ROBE AND ONE OF THOSE CONE HATS. I'M WEARING WHITE ARMOR. WE'RE BOTH RIDING HORSES.

THE SUNLIGHT HITS YOUR HAIR. YOU SMILE. WE DON'T TALK.

SUDDENLY AN ARROW HITS ME. I FALL OFF MY HORSE.
BANDITS ATTACK.
THEY PULL YOU OFF YOUR HORSE AND TEAR YOUR DRESS AND THROW YOU TO THE GROUND.
I RISE AND PULL OUT MY SWORD AND IT'S HUGE AND I CHARGE THEM, HACK AT THEM.
HACK AT THEM.
HACK AT THEM.

I AM LEFT ALONE WITH MY THOUGHTS...
...AND WITH VANESSA.
SHE SLEEPS LIKE A CHILD...
...AN INNOCENT GIRL...
...AND WHEN SHE WAKES...
...AND SEES ME...
...I CAN ONLY THINK OF CHERYL... SHE IS MUCH LIKE CHERYL WAS...
...BEFORE CHERYL BECAME... SO CAPABLE...
...AND THIS POOR WOMAN...
...IS MY ONLY WEAPON...

KNEW THE FAT MAN WAS USING FREELANCERS ON THIS ONE.
GUESS WE PARTNERS NOW, HUH?
WHERE ARE YOU, ANYWAY? WE ALMOST AT THE HOTEL.
SO WHAT'S THE PLAN?
I MEAN, I'D FIGURE TO MOVE ON THE DOCTOR...
--BUT-- NOW THAT I THINKS ABOUT IT
...YOU GRAB THE DOC'S OLD LADY AN' YOU HOLD THE WHOLE DECK, MAN.
YOU CAN SQUEEZE THE KINGPIN FOR ALL HE GOT.
...MAN...
...HOW WE GOING TO BE PARTNERS WHEN YOU DON'T TALK?

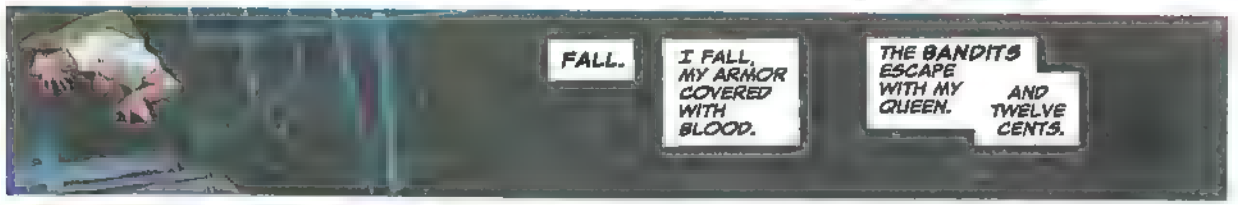
BZZZTT
IT'S ME, VIC. OPEN UP.
NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
IT'S JUST TURK.
JUST HAND ME THE PILLS.
AND DON'T TALK.
GOTS TO USE THE CAN, MAN.
THAS THE WIFE? SOME PIECE--
WATCH YOUR MOUTH.
JUST TURK WITH MY PILLS.
NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
MAN, YOU EVER CLEAN THIS THING?
NOTHING TO--
VICTOR-- PUT DOWN THE GUN.
RIGHT
HERE
IN
THE
ROOM

--THE EVIL PRINCE--
--THROUGH THE WINDOW THROUGH IT--
--THE EVIL PRINCE AND ALL HIS MEN--
--DON'T TOUCH ME--
--EVIL PRINCE AND ALL HIS EVIL MEN--
--CHERYL--
--THEY SURROUND US-- THEY GRAB MY QUEEN--
--I BREAK FREE--
--ON MY WHITE STALLION--
NNFF
--I'LL COME BACK FOR YOU--
--BACK FOR YOU MY QUEEN--
--CHERYL--
--MY QUEEN BACK FOR YOU--
VICTOR--
--YOU CAN'T ESCAPE ME--

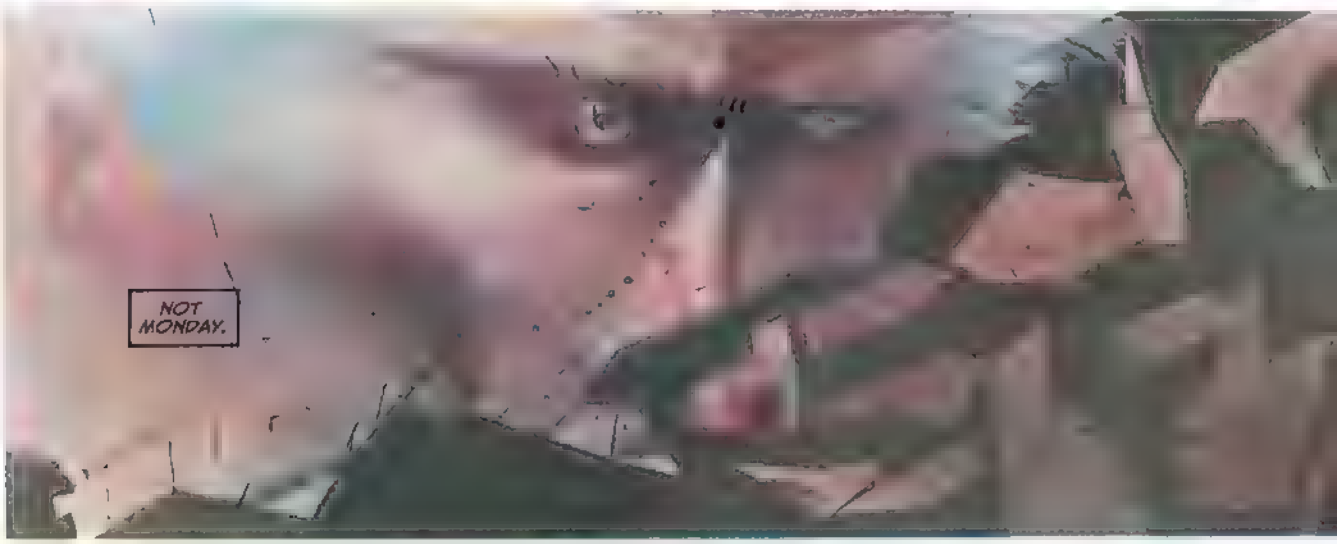
THAT'S IT, VICTOR--
--YOU'RE OUT OF BULLETS--
LUNATIC SCRAMBLES DOWN A MANHOLE-- MY TRICK--
--HE'S BLEEDING--
--CRAWLING IN THE SUBWAY TUNNEL--
--I'LL GIVE HIM A BLOCK--
--OH NO--

--WASN'T READY--
--TOO LOUD--
TYKLACKL

--HE'S GONE. I LOST HIM.
ICKETYKLACKLICKETYKLACKLICKETYKLACKLICETYKLACK

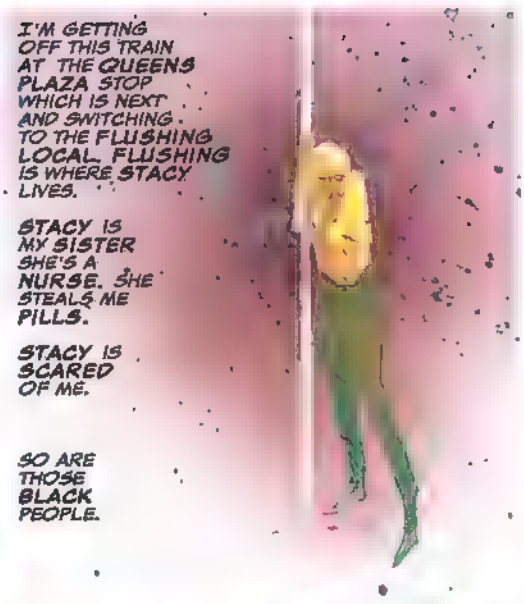

FALL.
I FALL, MY ARMOR COVERED WITH BLOOD.
THE BANDITS ESCAPE WITH MY QUEEN.
AND TWELVE CENTS.

CHERYL.
BUT I WILL FIND THEM. SAVE HER HONOR.
TAKE MY HUGE SWORD AND HACK THE BANDITS TO--

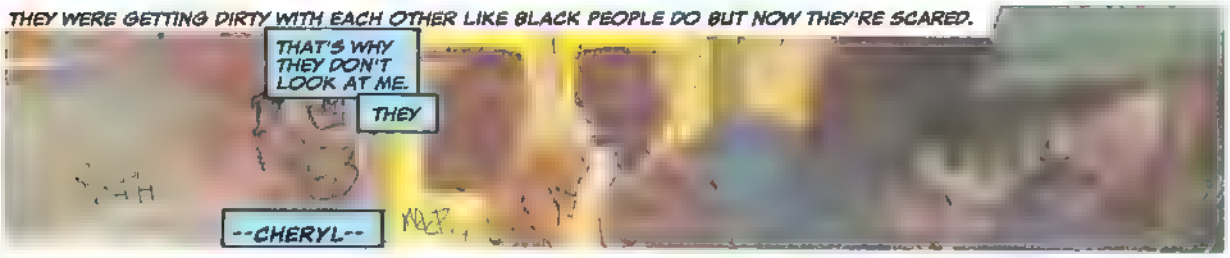

NOT MONDAY.

...LOST SIXTEEN POUNDS OF UNCUT...
MY WAREHOUSE AT PIER 41 BURST INTO FLAME AT 3:22 A.M.
BY 5:00 A.M., THE USUAL MALCONTENTS HAD BEEN QUESTIONED, WITH NO RESULTS.
ON A HUNCH, I HAD TORCH WILLINGHAM BEATEN WITH A LEAD PIPE.
...NO SHAPE TO LIE, BOSS...
AT 5:50 WILLINGHAM FINGERED LOUIS RICOTTA FOR A CONSPIRACY TO MUTINY.
I EMPLOY TWO FINKS IN RICOTTA'S OPERATION. ON MY ORDER, ONE OF THEM LEAKED THE NEWS OF WILLINGHAM'S CONFESSION.
MY SECOND FINK MAINTAINS RICOTTA'S PRIVATE HELICOPTER.
YES, VANESSA. YOU CAN DO IT...
IT IS NOW 6:45. RICOTTA IS FLYING PAST STATEN ISLAND.
IN SECONDS I WILL BE INFORMED THAT RICOTTA IS DEBRIS.
...RIGHT ON SCHEDULE...
DEBRIS.

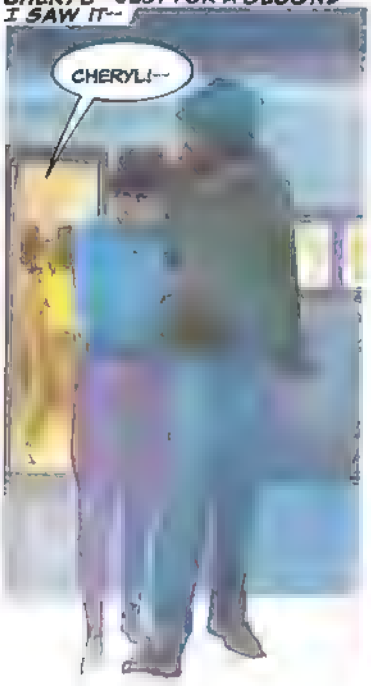
I'M ALL WET WITH BLOOD BUT THE RIDE IS FREE. CLIMBED RIGHT DOWN INTO THE STATION AND NOBODY SAW.



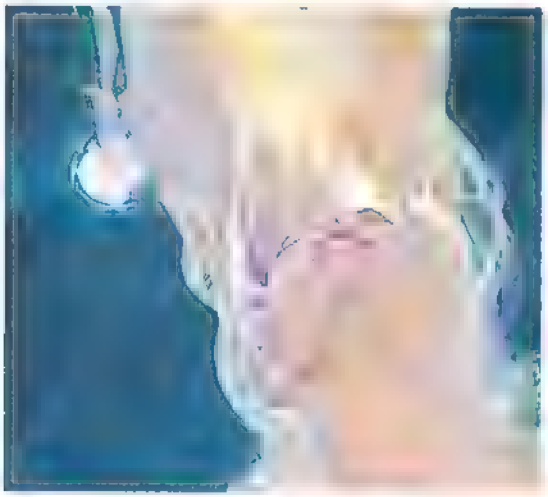
THEY WERE GETTING DIRTY WITH EACH OTHER LIKE BLACK PEOPLE DO BUT NOW THEY'RE SCARED.



THAT BLACK WOMAN TURNED INTO CHERYL--JUST FOR A SECOND--I SAW IT--



CHERYL MUMBLES MUSICALLY, DRIFTING TOWARD CONSCIOUSNESS.
SHE BECOMES AWARE OF MY ARMS AROUND HER AND THE WIND ACROSS HER LEGS.
A SIREN WAILS, FAR BELOW US.
SHE BREAKS A LIGHT, FRAGRANT SWEAT THAT EVAPORATES INSTANTLY IN THE NIGHT AIR.
I DRAW HER CLOSE.
HER EYELIDS FLUTTER, BRIEFLY, UNBELIEVING.
HER HEART PICKS UP THE PACE.
HER BOSOM SHIFTS AGAINST MINE, AS SHE INHALES ONCE, ABRUPTLY, DEEPLY, A SCREAM RISING IN HER THROAT.
HER FINGERS GROPE FOR HANDHOLDS IN MY BACK, THEN FEELING MY STRENGTH, RELAX. THE SCREAM DIES.
THE RIDE IS OURS NOW AND SHE WELCOMES IT.



SHE SIGHS AND WILTS IN MY ARMS, DREAMING.
SHE'S SAFE WITH ME.

I GOT OFF THE "F" TRAIN AT JACKSON HEIGHTS AND TOOK ANOTHER ONE THAT LOOKED JUST LIKE IT BACK TO QUEENS PLAZA.
THEN I TOOK THE FLUSHING LOCAL TO STACY'S.
DON'T HAVE TO TOUCH ME SO MUCH.
I THINK I COULD HAVE GOTTEN THE FLUSHING LOCAL AT JACKSON HEIGHTS.
BUT I'VE NEVER DONE THAT.
DON'T THINK I'M ENJOYING IT. WHEN'S THE LAST TIME YOU WASHED? JESUS...
WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE.
AND GET ME SOME PILLS. THE GOOD KIND.
PILLS, SURE. BUT YOU CAN'T USE THE CLOSET.
I'VE GOT A DATE TONIGHT.
I KNOW ABOUT YOUR DATES.
NOTHING --THAT'S WHAT YOU KNOW.
THAT'S YOUR WHOLE PROBLEM.

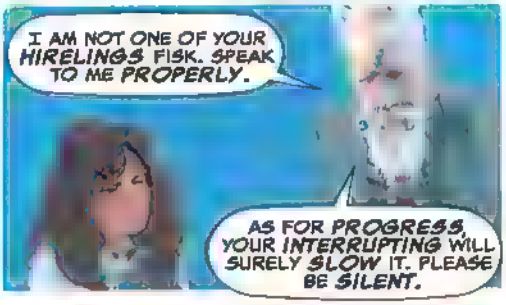
YOU HEAR THAT? MADE STACY CALL HER DATE OFF.
WHAT? I DIDN'T HEAR YOU. WHAT'D YOU SAY?
YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THAT.
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT SHE IS.
NO--DON'T SAY THAT. DON'T SAY THAT.
STACY, SURE. BUT...
...BUT CHERYL IS A MARRIED WOMAN...

I COUNT. JUST INSIDE MY HEAD.
I COUNT TO TWO HUNDRED FIFTY-SIX THOUSAND
FOUR HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHT.
NO.
CHERYL'S SPECIAL.
...WELL ...OKAY. SO MAYBE I DO.
BUT NONE OF THAT OTHER STUFF.
I SAID NONE OF THAT OTHER STUFF.
THAT'S NO WAY TO TALK.
AND IT'S NOT TRUE.
I'D NEVER--
YOU JUST SHUT UP RIGHT THIS SECOND. I'D NEVER--
NEVER--

CHRIST, WILL YOU KEEP IT DOWN?
IT'S ALL RIGHT. IT MAKES SENSE. IT'S STACY--
IT'S FOUR IN THE GOD DAMN MORNING, VICTOR.
SOME OF US LIKE TO SLEEP.
I MEAN, CHRIST, VICTOR...
SHUT UP.
DON'T TELL ME TO SHUT UP. I'LL--
SHUT UP...
GGNNO...
...NO WAY TO TALK...
I'LL KICK YOUR GOD DAMN ASS OUT OF--
--VICTOR--
OH, JESUS.
NO WAY TO TALK

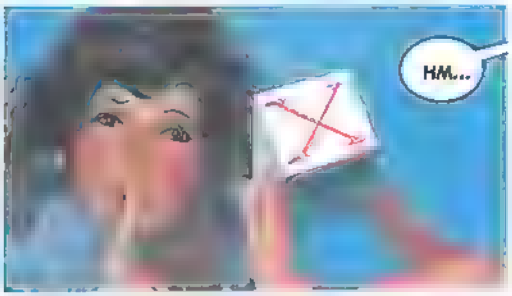
WERE IT NOT INCONCEIVABLE-- I WOULD THINK SHE JUMPED-- AT THE SOUND OF MY VOICE.

WAS THERE FEAR IN HER EYES-- BEFORE I SPOKE?...



...ALREADY SHE RESPONDS TO HIM... REACHES OUT TO HIM...

...OF COURSE. THIS IS HIS AREA OF EXPERTISE.



...IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TECHNIQUE...

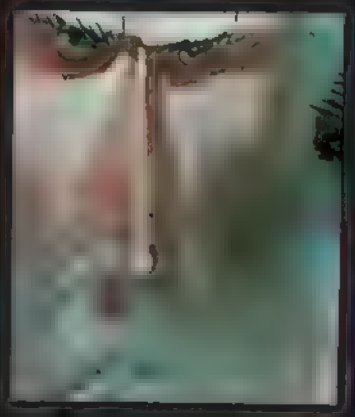
...IS IT DAWN ALREADY?
BY NOW THE KINGPIN KNOWS I HAVE CHERYL. I'D LOVE TO KNOW HOW MANY MORE CIGARS HE'S SMOKING...
COME ON, BABY...
--DON'T FALL APART ON ME NOW...
...HERE...JUST ONE MORE...LITTLE TOOTHPICK...
AH...
CHERYL'S BREATHING STEADILY, A ROOM AWAY... SLEEPING IT OFF...
...KINGPIN'S BUILDING IS FORTIFIED...
TEN FOOT FENCE HERE, NOT CHARGED. DOGS AND GUARDS INSIDE IT, ALWAYS MOVING...
...ONLY WALL WITHOUT CAMERAS. NO HAND-HOLDS... I'LL NEED A GRAPPLING HOOK AND ROPE...

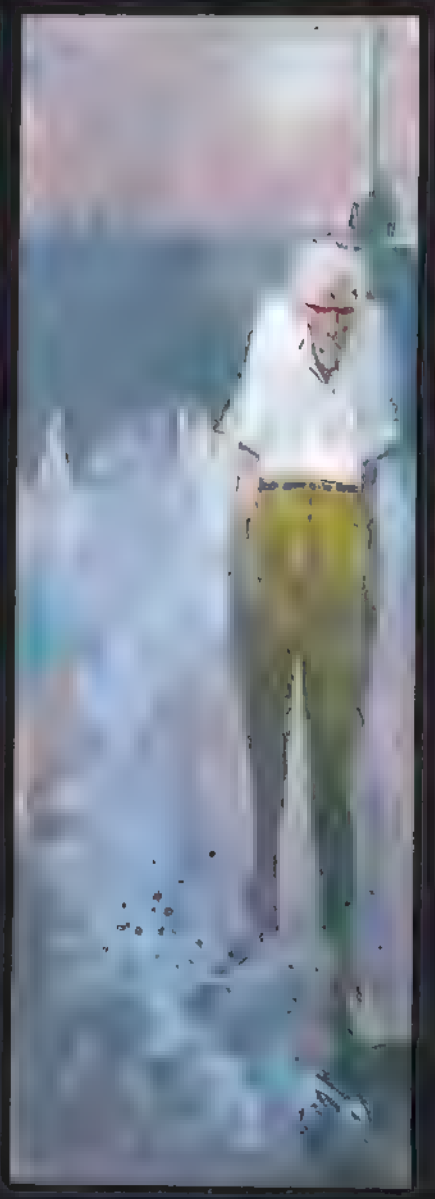
PLAYKING
WHAT IN--
--THE BEDROOM--
--CHERYL--
--COLLAPSED--MORE FROM THE TRAUMA THAN THE VALIUM VICTOR PUMPED INTO HER.
LUCKY SHE DIDN'T HURT HERSELF--
WHERE...
EASY, NOW. YOU'RE SAFE.
WHO ARE YOU...
YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH A LOT. TRY TO RELAX.
SHE SINKS WEIGHTLESS AGAINST ME. I SMELL HER HAIR AND REMIND MYSELF SHE'S A MARRIED WOMAN.
BETTER FOR BOTH OF US THAT SHE SLEEPS.
...CAN'T HAVE HER REALIZING THAT I'M AS BLIND AS SHE IS...
THE FIRE IS ROARING. I LAY HER DOWN IN FRONT OF IT.

I TAKE THE IRT (INTERBOROUGH RAPID TRANSIT) STRAIGHT INTO MANHATTAN. NOT EVEN BOTHERING WITH THE "F" TRAIN EVEN THOUGH IT WOULD'VE TAKEN ME CLOSER TO THE LIBRARY.

IN THE CLOSET I'D PLANNED TO READ UP ON DAREDEVIL AT THE LIBRARY CAREFULLY AND FIGURE OUT WHERE HE LIVES.

BUT I'M NOT GOING TO DO THAT.





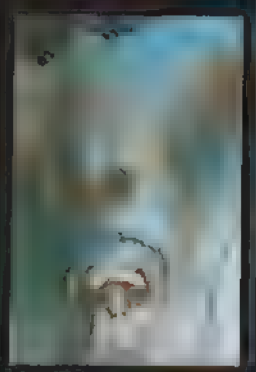
THIS CHERYL THING HAS GOTTEN OUT OF HAND. I'M NOT A KNIGHT. SHE'S NOT A QUEEN. I DON'T LOVE HER. I DON'T EVEN KNOW HER.

I JUST HAVEN'T BEEN WATCHING MY THOUGHTS.

IT'S THE PILLS. I TAKE TOO MANY PILLS.

I'LL GO TO THE KINGPIN RIGHT NOW AND REPORT.

AND I WON'T TAKE ANY MORE PILLS.



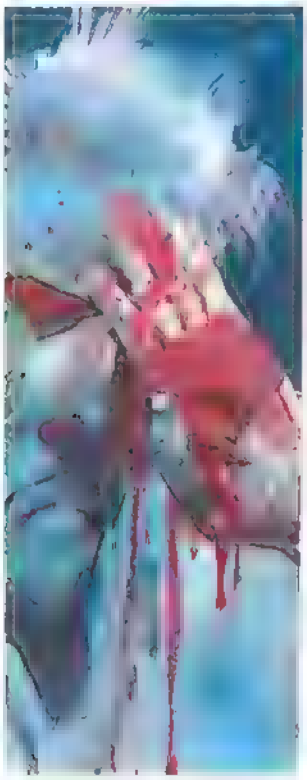
I'M FEELING MUCH BETTER NOW THAT I'VE GIVEN UP ON CHERYL.
READING ALWAYS RELAXES ME. I OWN A BOOK WHICH I READ EVERY TUESDAY NIGHT. COVER TO COVER.
BUT MY BOOK IS IN QUEENS AND THE NEW EDITION I SAW IN A BOOKSTORE HAS A COVER I DON'T LIKE AND I CAN'T AFFORD IT AND I DON'T STEAL.
AND READING IN THE LIBRARY IS FREE UNLESS YOU MAKE XEROXES.
WHICH I DON'T BECAUSE IT WOULD BE CRAZY TO TRY AND XEROX MICRO-FILM. I'M READING JUST FOR FUN.
I READ ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-TWO NEWS STORIES. SOME OF THEM REPEAT IN DIFFERENT NEWSPAPERS BUT I READ THEM ANYWAY FOR FUN.
NELSON AND MURDOCK. THEY'RE LAWYERS AND THEY'RE IN A LOT OF THE STORIES. ALWAYS FOR DIFFERENT REASONS BUT THEY KEEP POPPING UP. THEY MUST BE DAREDEVIL'S LAWYERS.
I BET THEY KNOW WHERE HE LIVES.
BUT I DON'T CARE.
I'VE GIVEN UP ON CHERYL.
I'M IN HERE
Drug test more
track
JOAN BECK
APOTHECARY NOW
THE BOLIVIAN DRUG INVASION
RAYMOND COFFEY
BREWERS TIP YANKS IN 10
The Brewers did it again. They thwarted the Yanks' chance to pick up ground on the first-place Red Sox.
DAILY NEWS
Make peace in troubled Belmont
The Inquiring Photographer
By John Stapleton
College education caught in
THOMAS SOWELL
A Rocky battle over $
Margaret de Larrain
Grab druggies' cars for keeps
Keep homicide nonprofit

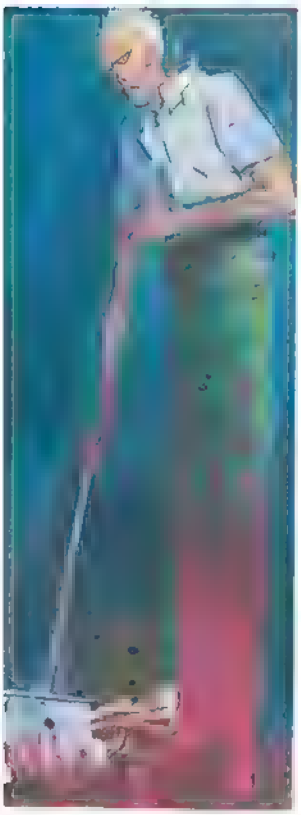
VERY GOOD, VANESSA...
VERY GOOD...
SHE'S TRYING... TO TELL HIM SOMETHING...
X
K
HER HAND ...IT QUIVERS...
,T S ALL RIGHT, DEAR.
WE LL JJST START OVER.
ALREADY... MONDAT GAINS HER TRUST...
...SUCH...
...TECHNIQUE...

IT GOT DARK OUT AND THE LIBRARY CLOSED. BOTH OF THESE THINGS HAPPENED AT THE SAME TIME AND VERY FAST.
I WAIT FOR THE SIGN TO CHANGE BEFORE I CROSS THE STREET.
AND
RIGHT
OUT
OF
NOWHERE
COMES
THIS
TAXI--
WHUMP
--HIT ME. COULD'VE KILLED ME--
--COULD'VE KILLED ME AND HE DIDN'T EVEN STOP--
I WRITE HIS LICENSE NUMBER DOWN. HE'LL HEAR FROM MY LAWYER.
SOON AS I GET ONE.

EXCUSE ME...
...OFFICE IS CLOSED. COME BACK TOMORROW.
NELSON & MURDOCK
JUST CHECKING THE LOCKS...
I JUST SMELL EGG SALAD.
THAT'S ALL.
"COME BACK TOMORROW." SOME LAWYERS.
I'LL GET THEIR NUMBERS AND CALL THEM AT HOME.
WISH I COULD REMEMBER HOW I GOT HERE.
NELSON IS THE FIRST NAME ON THE DOOR SO I CHECK IT FIRST.
IT'S RIGHT UNDER "N" WHERE IT BELONGS.
THERE'S HIS PHONE NUMBER, TYPED NEATLY.
AND HIS ADDRESS.
BUT ALL I WANT IS HIS PHONE NUMBER.
I'M NOT GOING TO HIS HOUSE.

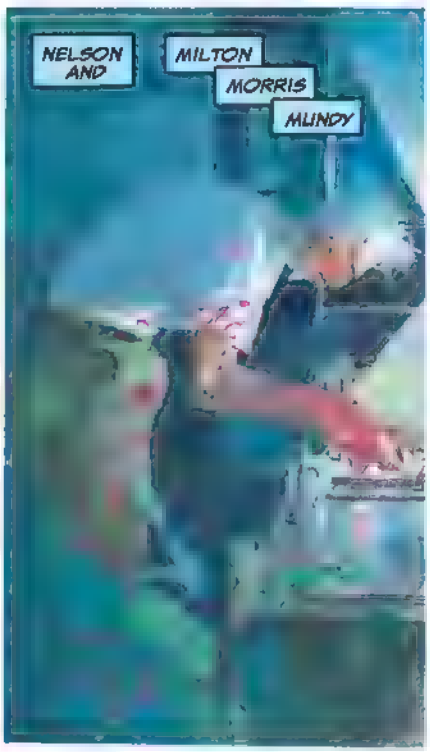
KNOCK KNOCK
--NO--I HAVEN'T GONE ANYWHERE-- I'M STILL IN THE OFFICE-- IT'S JUST A CLEANING WOMAN--
--JUST A CLEANING WOMAN--
DOESN'T LOOK LIKE CHERYL.
AND I'VE GIVEN UP ON CHERYL ANYWAY.
JUST A
EGG SALAD

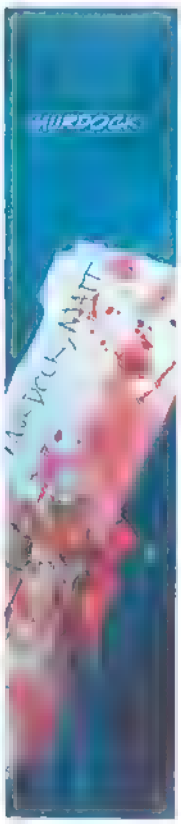




I'VE HALF A MIND TO GO TO NELSON'S HOUSE RIGHT NOW TO STRAIGHTEN THIS OUT.

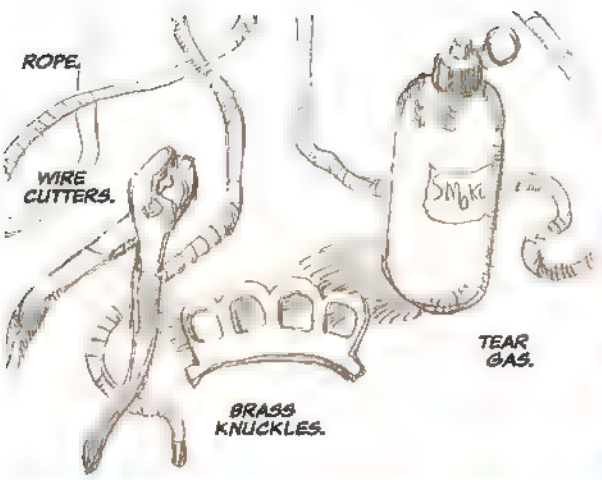
CAN'T READ A CARD WHEN THERE'S SOMETHING ALL OVER IT. CAN'T GO TO NELSON'S IF I DON'T KNOW WHERE IT IS.

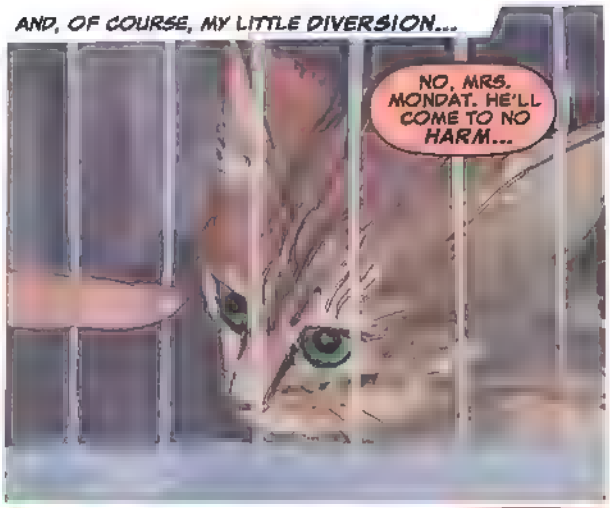




SHE'S A MARRIED WOMAN.
SHE SMILES, SURPRISED BY THE SMELL OF ESPRESSO.
THE SMILE ONLY LASTS A SECOND.
SHE SHAKES THE SLEEP AWAY AND ASKS ME WHERE HER HUSBAND IS.
I TELL HER.
I MAKE ALL THE RIGHT PROMISES.
SHE DOESN'T CRY.
SHE CURLS ON THE COUCH, HER BACK TO ME, HOLDING HER CUP IN BOTH HANDS.
HER VOICE IS STRONG WHEN SHE ASKS ME WHO I AM.
I'M A FRIEND, MRS. MONDAT.
AND I'M YOUR PRISONER.
YES.

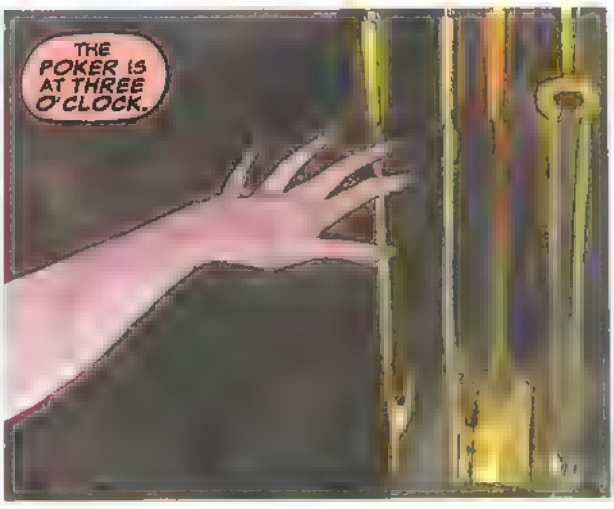
YES... GO AHEAD...
PIECE BY PIECE...
LETTER BY LETTER...
...WHAT IS IT, VANESSA?
YOU ARE IN SUCH PAIN...
GOOD... GOOD...
..WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY?


ROPE.
WIRE CUTTERS.
TEAR GAS.
BRASS KNUCKLES.


AND, OF COURSE, MY LITTLE DIVERSION...
NO, MRS. MONDAT. HE'LL COME TO NO HARM...

YOU'RE LEAVING.
YES. BY NOW IT'S DARK ENOUGH.
I'M TRUSTING YOU TO STAY --AND NOT TO ANSWER THE PHONE OR THE DOOR.
I SHOULD BE BACK IN TWO HOURS.

WITH PAUL?
YES. AND KEEP THAT FIRE GOING. HEAT WILL DO YOU GOOD.
IT COULD USE A LITTLE STOKING RIGHT NOW.


THE POKER IS AT THREE O'CLOCK.

HOW HE COAXES HER... SO SOFTLY...
K
A
Y
...SO SURELY...
THEN... SHE LOOKS AT HIM, FOR STRENGTH...
...AND STARES AT THE CAMERA... AT ME...
WITH A FRIGHTENED SOB...
...A GLANCE THAT HOLDS REGRET...
...WITH A SINGLE CHILD'S BLOCK...
P
...SHE STABS ME...
X
K
A
Y
P
...SHE SHATTERS ME...

SO FAR THE TIMING IS GOOD. I'M AT WORK ON THE FENCE--
CHIK CHIK CHIK
ALMOST AS SOON AS I SMELL HIM--
--THE DOBERMAN CATCHES MY SCENT.
I DON'T THINK HE'S MADE UP HIS MIND TO LIKE ME.
THAT'S OKAY...
MROWR
...I'VE BROUGHT SOMEBODY HE LIKES EVEN LESS.
THEY'RE CLOSE--
--IT'S ALL IN THE TIMING--
STEADY, BOY--WORST THAT CAN HAPPEN--
--IS THAT YOU SCORE AN EXTRA RATION OF MEAT TONIGHT--

JUST THE KIND OF MEAT YOU
WOAH, BOY-
--IT'S JUST A PUSSY!
MRROWWW
I'M DOWN WIND OF THE DOG--
--AND HE'S TOO BUSY WITH THE CAT TO HEAR ME.
RIGHT NOW I LOVE DOGS.
QUICKLY NOW--
CHK K K
LITTLE BIT OF A WOBBLE ...HOOK'S WEAK...
SHOULD'VE RUN TESTS...
SKRIKK

FROM MY WORLD... FROM ME... SHE SEEKS..
XKAYP
NOW, MONSIEUR FISK--
MONSIEUR KINGPIN OF CRIME--
--YOU HAVE MY WIFE--
--AND I
--I HAVE YOURS!

BZZTT
SHAKES
SHAKES START WON'T STOP
JUST WANT
ANSWER DOOR
JUST WANT TO TALK TO MY LAWYER
BZZTT
BZZTT
BZZTT
BZZTT
BZZTT
BZZZZ
ZZZZZZ
ZZZZZZ
ZZZTT
CHIK TINK
GOT A RIGHT
TALK TO MY
SKELETON KEY
CHIK TINK
SHAKES
SMELL EGGS
ANSWER DOOR
THAT'S ALL
SHAKES
WON'T STOP
NO MORE PILLS
EGGS THAT'S ALL
DROP
KEY
EGGS
KLINK
BZZT
BZZT
BZZT
BZZT

THE REAL TROUBLE STARTS ON THE FOURTH THROW.
KKKKK
THE HOOK IS GIVING --I'M WOBBLING LIKE AN OLD MAN AT FLOOR SIXTY
THIS IS CRAZY...
SIXTY ONE...
KKKKK
...SIXTY TWO...
... BAD ON THE TRICEPS ...WORSE ON THE HOOK...
...NO GOOD...SHOULDN'T PUSH MY LUCK...
...SHOULDN'T ...BUT I PROMISED CHERYL...
...SIXTY THREE
THE FLOOR I WANT
--WHICH WOULD BE GREAT--
IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE CAMERAS,
HAD TO AVOID THEM BY CLIMBING THE SIDE WITH NO WINDOWS.
SIXTY-FOOT SWING TO THE SIDE TO REACH THEM. IT'S SUICIDE...
...HOOK WILL NEVER HOLD...
...SUICIDE...

I KICK AWAY FROM THE WALL... MAYBE I PRAY.
MAYBE I DON'T GO TO CHURCH--
--NEARLY OFTEN ENOUGH...
KKKK
TINK
STUPID
STUPID
NO DON'T THINK
FEEL IT
FEEL IT ALL
THE WIND THE WALL THE LEDGE
THE LEDGE
REACH OUT

--TENDONS SNAP ACROSS MY BACK--
--MY SHOULDER POPS DISLOCATED--
...VOICES ...FROM INSIDE...
WHAT WAS THAT?
NO...
...MUSTN'T... LET MYSELF BE SEEN...
NEVER... MIND THE PAIN...
MAN, I HEARD SOMETHING OUTSIDE.
DON'T TRY TO DISTRACT ME FROM FIRING YOU, TURK.
DON'T SEE NOTHING. BUT I HEARD...
MAYBE SOME PIDGEON ACED HIMSELF ON THE LEDGE.
TURK, WE'RE FORTY-FIVE STORIES UP.
FORTY-FIVE...
THAT'S EIGHTEEN STORIES LOW.
ARM'S USELESS...
OKAY, MAN. SO NOTHING'S THERE. BUT LIKE I WAS SAYING-- SKILLS LIKE MINE...
I'VE SEEN YOUR SKILLS, TURK.

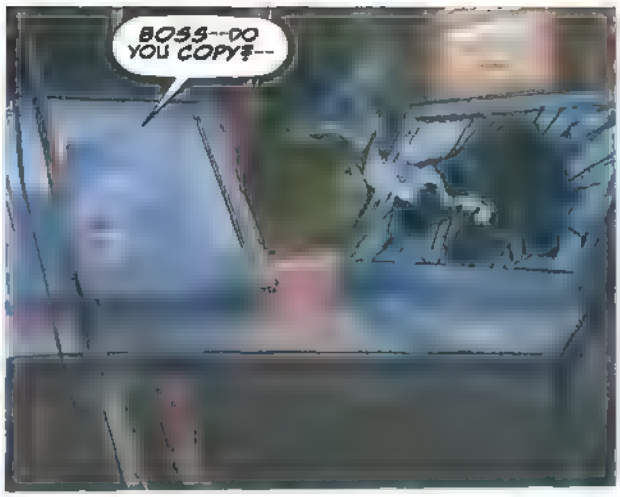
...WON'T BE ABLE TO CLIMB...
ONLY ONE WAY TO GO...
DIDN'T WANT TO DRAG MY MOTHER INTO THIS. I HATES TO BEG...
I KNOW THAT ABOUT YOU, TURK. SHE'S SICK, RIGHT?
FINGERS NUMB... SLOW WORK...
...TURK'S WHINING MAKES IT WORSE...
SICK? MAN, SHE DYIN'!
DYING. RIGHT.
FOOTSTEPS IN CORRIDOR. JANGLING OF KEYS.
SHE'S GOTS LEUKEMIA...
UH HUH...
DOOR SWINGING OPEN. LIGHT SWITCH-- IT'S A GUARD...
AN' DIPTHERIA.
HOW DO YOU BEAR UP, TURK?
...YOU REALLY DO NOT WANT TO LOOK AT THIS WINDOW...
...AN' I CAN'T MAKE PAYMENTS ON HER KIDNEY MACHINE...
...GOOD... THAT'S RIGHT...
I'M IN.

NO WAY TO TALK
REACH IN
AROUND
GET DOOR
WH
IT'S
RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME IT'S
IT'S
IT'S CH
CH
NOT MONDAY
I'M
I'M FEELING MUCH BETTER
NOW
NOW THAT I'VE GIVEN UP
EGGS

DINGG
TURK! YOU GOT THE JOB!
NO, MAN ...THIS...I MEAN, I'M WORKING UNDER COVER, MAN...
I'M YOUR BACK UP!
I BELIEVE YOU TURK.
EVEN KNOW WHAT LEVEL THE DOC'S ON, MAN...
SO HOW'D YOU GET IN, DEVIL?
I FLEW IN, TURK.
...COURSE, I KNEW THAT. 'SPOSE THE WINDOW LOCKS WEREN'T MUCH TROUBLE...
MELTED THEM WITH MY HEAT VISION.
THAT'S WHAT I FIGURED. ANYWAY, PARTNER, WE GOT A PROBLEM, SEE...
...THIS ELEVATOR'S STOPPING AT LEVEL FIFTY, SEE... AN' THERE'S A SECURITY CHECK.
AN' SEE THE NEW GUY WHAT'S UP THERE, HE LIKES TO SHOOT...
THINK YOU MIGHT LET ME GET CLEAR?
I KEEP MY MOUTH SHUT, I SWEAR, MAN...
DINGG

BEHIND ME--IN THERE--
IT'S DAREDEVIL, MAN--
TURK, YOU SCHMUCK. IT'S EMPTY.
KEEP SHOOTING, MAN--HE CAN TURN HISSELF INVISIBLE--
TWELVE FLOORS TO GO. WITH ONE GOOD ARM.
THERE GOES THE ALARM...
...THEY'LL HAVE ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD TO GET READY FOR ME...

--BREAK-IN, BOSS. TURK SAYS IT'S DAREDEVIL!


BOSS--DO YOU COPY?--

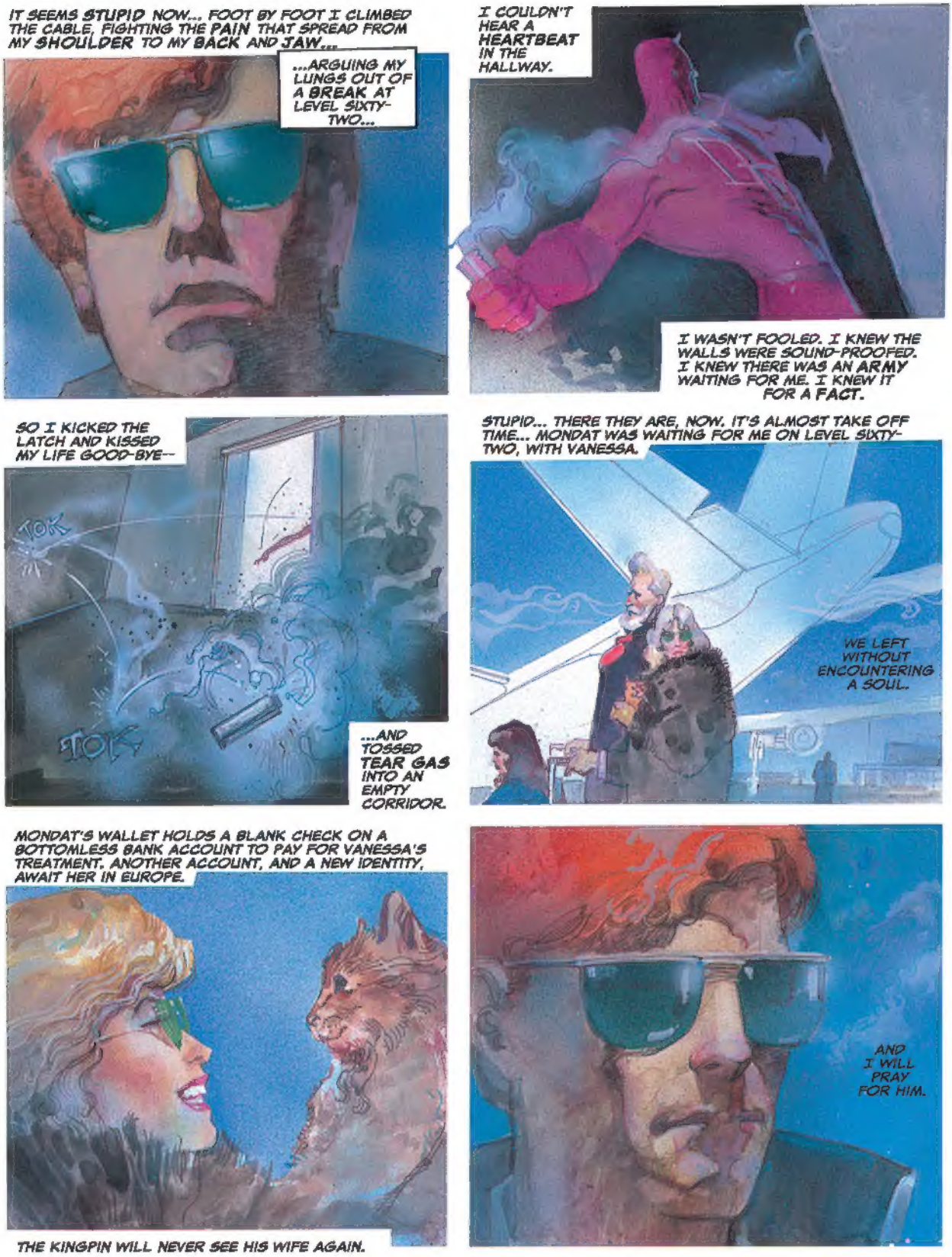
THE CRYSTAL IS SPLINTERED. RUINED.
IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO REPLACE. YOU SIMPLY CANNOT GET THIS LEVEL OF CRAFTSMANSHIP IN AMERICA.
YES. I SHALL CERTAINLY BE FORCED TO HIRE A EUROPEAN TO FASHION A NEW CRYSTAL.
PERHAPS A CHINESE.
THE CHINESE DO LOVELY WORK.
IT WAS AN ACCIDENT. BREAKING THE CRYSTAL.

I FORGOT THAT IT WAS ON MY DESK.

PED
SURROUNDED BY A HUGE SWORD
BIGGEST
I SMELL CHERYL.
THAT'S ALL.
NO PILLS
WHITE KNIGHT
NOT MONDAY
DIDN'T EVEN STOP
DESERVE HAVE ATTORNEY
EGGS
FEELING BETTER
CH
CHERYL
CHERYL
I'M
FEELING MUCH BETTER
LOVE YOU CHERYL
NOTHING LIKE THAT
NOTHING
I LOVE YOU, CHERYL
SUNLIGHT
SUNLIGHT
SUNLIGHT STRIKES YOUR HAIR
YOU SMILE AND WE DON'T
NOTHING LIKE THAT
MISSED
MISSED MY STOP
TANGLED IN THE CURTAIN
NO, CHERYL
THUK
MY QUEEN
EGGS
DON'T RUN, CHERYL.
IT'S THE EVIL PRINCE
HE'S MAKING YOU SEE
GRAB IT
I WANT
NOTHING LIKE THAT
YOUR GOWN IS SOFT
QUEEN CHERYL
NOTHING LIKE THAT
NO
NOT MONDAY
FEELING MUCH BETTER

I THOUGHT I'D NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN, CHERYL.
IT TOOK MONTHS FOR MY WOUNDS TO HEAL.
NOW WE
NOTHING LIKE THAT
TURN OVER.
NO PILLS
ALL THE WAY OVER
STOP MOVING
STOP MOVING LIKE THAT
STOP MOVING
YOUR HIPS LIKE THAT
SHE'S TALKING
CALLING ME NAMES
BUT THE NAMES
DON'T MAKE SENSE
SOUNDS LIKE FRENCH
WHUMF
NO WAY TO TALK.

NO WAY TO
YOU SMILE AND WE DON'T TALK.
KRAAK
KKK
OR MOVE.
NOW WE RIDE OFF ON MY WHITE HORSE INTO THE
SUNLIGHT STRIKES YOUR HAIR
I LOVE YOU, CHERYL
CH
CHUK


IT SEEMS STUPID NOW... FOOT BY FOOT I CLIMBED THE CABLE, FIGHTING THE PAIN THAT SPREAD FROM MY SHOULDER TO MY BACK AND JAW...
...ARGUING MY LUNGS OUT OF A BREAK AT LEVEL SIXTY-TWO...
I COULDN'T HEAR A HEARTBEAT IN THE HALLWAY.
I WASN'T FOOLED. I KNEW THE WALLS WERE SOUND-PROOFED. I KNEW THERE WAS AN ARMY WAITING FOR ME. I KNEW IT FOR A FACT.
SO I KICKED THE LATCH AND KISSED MY LIFE GOOD-BYE--
TOK
TOK
...AND TOSSED TEAR GAS INTO AN EMPTY CORRIDOR.
STUPID... THERE THEY ARE, NOW. IT'S ALMOST TAKE OFF TIME... MONDAT WAS WAITING FOR ME ON LEVEL SIXTY-TWO, WITH VANESSA.
WE LEFT WITHOUT ENCOUNTERING A SOUL.
MONDAT'S WALLET HOLDS A BLANK CHECK ON A BOTTOMLESS BANK ACCOUNT TO PAY FOR VANESSA'S TREATMENT. ANOTHER ACCOUNT, AND A NEW IDENTITY, AWAIT HER IN EUROPE.
AND I WILL PRAY FOR HIM.
THE KINGPIN WILL NEVER SEE HIS WIFE AGAIN.

I HAVE BUILT AN EMPIRE ON HUMAN SIN.
I AM FEARED BY THE HONEST AND THE WICKED. ELECTED OFFICIALS OBEY MY WILL AS SWIFTLY AS THE LOWEST PIMPS AND PUSHERS.
I HAVE EVERYTHING I DESIRED...